

Claims

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 5 1. A method for communicating information for a wireless apparatus in communication with a first wireless communication system and also in communication with a second wireless communication system comprising:
determining whether the wireless apparatus will allow shared use of its wireless resources with proximal wireless units; and
10 providing a reward for allowing the shared use of the wireless apparatus shared resources.
- 15 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of determining whether the wireless apparatus will allow shared use of its wireless resources with proximal wireless units includes receiving data representing whether a user desires to participate in allowing the wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources.
- 20 3. The method of claim 2 including presenting a user input interface having a selection menu to generate the data representing whether a user desires to participate in allowing the wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources.
- 25 4. The method of claim 3 including the step of enabling the wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources in response to the data representing whether a user desires to participate in allowing the wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources.
- 30 5. The method of claim 2 including the step of locating the proximal wireless units in response to determining that the wireless apparatus is designated as a shared wireless resource.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein the first wireless communication system includes a short range wireless local area network and wherein the second wireless communication system includes a wireless wide area network and including the step of generating a user record identifying a type of reward that

is provided in response to enabling the wireless apparatus to act as a shared wireless resource.

5 7. The method of claim 6 wherein the local area network includes a radio frequency LAN wherein a communication range is less than one-hundred meters and wherein the WAN includes a digital radio frequency cellular communication system.

10 8. The method of claim 1 including the steps of:
receiving data representing whether a user desires to participate in allowing the wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources;
generating a first message, in response to receiving the data, for a proximal wireless unit in the first wireless communication system, indicating an amount of bandwidth that the wireless apparatus can share with proximal
15 wireless units;
generating a second message, in response to receiving the data, for the second wireless communication system indicating that the wireless apparatus is allowing shared use of its wireless resources by proximal wireless
20 units.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the first wireless communication system is a local area network and includes an optical local area network.

25 10. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of providing a reward for allowing the shared use of the wireless apparatus shared resources includes at least one of:
providing a credit amount to an associated user account, providing free use of wireless channels; providing a reduced price structure for the user and updating a subscriber billing system in response to enabling a shared resource feature.

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11. A method for communicating information comprising:
- receiving data representing whether a user desires to participate in
allowing a wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources with proximal
5 wireless units;
- determining whether the wireless apparatus will allow shared use of its
wireless resources with proximal wireless units that are in a wireless local area
network; and
- 10 enabling the wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources in
response to the data representing whether a user desires to participate in
allowing the wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources.
12. The method of claim 11 including the step of presenting a user input interface
having a selection menu to generate the data representing whether a user desires to
15 participate in allowing the wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources.
13. The method of claim 11 including the step of discovering the proximal wireless
units in response to determining that the wireless apparatus is designated as a
shared wireless resource.
- 20 14. The method of claim 11 including the steps of:
- generating a first message, in response to receiving the data,
for a plurality of proximal wireless units in the first wireless communication
system, indicating an amount of bandwidth that the wireless apparatus can
25 share with the plurality of proximal wireless units; and
- generating a second message, in response to receiving the data,
for the second wireless communication system indicating that the wireless
apparatus is allowing shared use of its wireless resources by proximal wireless
units.
- 30 15. A wireless apparatus operative for communication with a wireless local area
network communication system and also operative for communication with a
wireless wide areas communication system comprising:

a circuit operative to receive data representing whether a user desires to participate in allowing a wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources with proximal wireless units; operative to generate a message for the WAN indicating whether the wireless apparatus will allow shared use of its local area network wireless resources with proximal wireless units that are in the wireless local area network; and operative to enable the wireless apparatus to share its local area network wireless resources in response to the data representing whether a user desires to participate in allowing the wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources.

16. The apparatus of claim 15 wherein the circuit includes a processing apparatus and memory wherein the memory contains executable instructions that when executed by the processing apparatus, causes the processing apparatus to:

receive data representing whether a user desires to participate in allowing a wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources with proximal wireless units;

generate a message for the WAN indicating whether the wireless apparatus will allow shared use of its local area network wireless resources with proximal wireless units that are in the wireless local area network; and

enable the wireless apparatus to share its local area network wireless resources in response to the data representing whether a user desires to participate in allowing the wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources.

17. The apparatus of claim 15 wherein the processing apparatus controls a presentation of a user input interface having a selection menu to generate the data representing whether a user desires to participate in allowing the wireless apparatus to share its wireless resources.

18. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the processing apparatus controls locating the proximal wireless units in response to determining that the wireless apparatus is designated as a shared wireless resource.

5 19. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the processing apparatus controls:

generation of a first message, in response to receiving the data, for a plurality of proximal wireless units in the first wireless communication system, indicating an amount of bandwidth that the wireless apparatus can share with the plurality of proximal wireless units; and

10 generation of a second message, in response to receiving the data, for the second wireless communication system indicating that the wireless apparatus is allowing shared use of its wireless resources by proximal wireless units.

15 20. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the processing apparatus receives data

indicating an amount of data to be sent via the wireless wide area network for the wireless apparatus; notifies the wide area network which of the plurality of wireless units will participate in sharing their wireless resources for use in facilitating communication with the wireless apparatus; sends to each of the participating wireless units, a partial bandwidth request indicating an amount of data to receive from the wide area network; and combines retransmitted portions of data from the plurality of participating wireless units, to obtain a complete communication.

21. A method for communicating information via a wireless apparatus comprising:

providing selectable enabling by a user of whether the wireless
apparatus will allow shared use of its wireless resources with proximal wireless units;

5 and

allowing shared use of wireless resources, by the wireless apparatus in
response to a selected enablement of shared use.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein the proximal wireless units communicate
10 with each other via a wireless wide area network.

23. The method of claim 21 wherein the proximal wireless units communicate
with each other via a wireless local area network.

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